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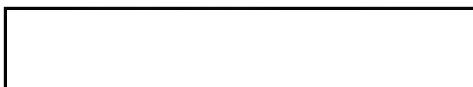
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USSR-BERLIN: At Wednesday's sessions of the four-power talks on Berlin, the Soviets moved to speed the pace of the negotiations, but contrary to some press reports there was little substantive progress.

The most significant development was Soviet Ambassador Abrasimov's unexpected and abrupt proposal that the date of the next meeting be moved up from 30 to 9 October. The Western ambassadors agreed to this and to a further recommendation that the ambassadorial gathering be preceded on 8 October by a working level meeting of embassy counselors.

This move reflects Moscow's sensitivity to the danger of being publicly blamed for delaying the talks. The Soviets know that the West Germans and others in the West regard the Berlin talks as a test of their sincerity in East-West negotiations. Abrasimov himself indicated that the USSR is keenly aware that prospects for West German ratification of the bilateral treaty with Moscow are closely tied to developments in Berlin.

On matters of substance, one new tack Abrasimov took Wednesday was to spell out informally what he called Moscow's "minimum demands" on restriction of Bonn's activities in West Berlin. These were the cessation of Bundestag meetings in West Berlin, the removal of West German government offices from the city, and the banning of the Berlin branch of the right-wing NPD party. This revised and simplified list of objectionable West German activities is aimed at appearing more forthcoming and at creating prospects for bargaining on the issue. His earlier catalogue of demands had been so detailed and wide ranging as to be un-negotiable.

Abrasimov sidestepped a Western protest regarding the Soviet effort to impose restrictions on two of the Berlin air corridors for a brief period early Wednesday morning. He disclaimed any knowledge of the attempt and blamed it on lower level officials.

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PANAMA: The government again is having difficulty finding funds for its pump-priming public works programs and in raising matching funds for internationally approved long-term economic projects. Having already obtained \$40 million on the international capital market within the past six months, the regime's ability to borrow additional funds at reasonable rates is becoming increasingly circumscribed. Government attempts to persuade the Panamanian business community to shed its suspicions and increase its rate of investment have not been successful. Moreover, there is no evidence that General Torrijos will cease his efforts to generate additional political support by responding generously to local financial appeals during his constant trips around the country.

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